

TO: MINNESOTA STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE & POLICY COMMITTEE
FROM: BETTY FOLLIARD, FOUNDER, ERA MINNESOTA
BETTY.FOLLIARD@GMAIL.COM 612-868-3511
IN FAVOR OF HF197 IN COMMITTEE HEARING MARCH 2, 2023

Madame Chair, Members of the Committee,

This is a simple resolution to Congress encouraging our leaders to enact the now fully ratified Equal Rights Amendment, the ERA. Minnesota ratified the ERA in 1973, and the Minnesota Senate passed a similar resolution in 2016 by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 56-6. I encourage you all to vote yes on House File 197. The essential concept of this resolution is to provide equal treatment under the law for all in this country.

What will the ERA do:

- **The ERA will remove ambiguity in the law to provide consistency in our court system against sex discrimination. Currently there are a patchwork of laws across this country regarding equality. The ERA will lend constitutional consistency in the law regardless of where you travel from state-to-state.**
- **The ERA will provide a constitutional safeguard against rollbacks on the gains that girls, women and LGBTQIA individuals have made over the last century.**
- **It will bring the United States in line with the rest of the world: currently 85% of UN member states have a provision in their constitution that specifically addresses gender equality, and a further 115 of them have a provision that prohibits discrimination “on the basis of sex”.**

Why do we still need the ERA:

- **Because women make on average 82 cents to a man’s dollar, with much, much larger inequities for Black, Indigenous, Latina, Asian women and Women of Color;**
- **because twice as many women as men over the age of 65 live in poverty;**
- **because 2/3 of minimum-wage earners are women and 2/3 of tipped workers are women;**
- **because less than 1% of rapists will ever be adjudicated;**
- **because we’re still fighting the battle for voting rights for All;**
- **because 1 in 5 college women will experience sexual assault;**
- **because women still get fired for being pregnant;**
- **because childcare can cost more than college;**
- **because some bosses deny workers birth-control coverage;**
- **because we’re 1 of only 3 industrialized countries in the world that have no paid maternity leave;**
- **because women fight & die for their country and still don’t have equal rights;**
- **and because women are not willing to wait another 246 years for equality.**

That’s why.

Girls & Women comprise over half the population of the United States: the ERA will guarantee them equality so that they cannot be treated as lesser than. The ERA will embed the fundamental guarantee in the US Constitution for equal rights for all people, ensuring that individuals, regardless of sex, are treated equally under the law. I respectfully request your yes vote and I thank you for your time.